

Michael F. Easley
Governor



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GOV. EASLEY CUTS RIBBON FOR NEW SAMPSON EARLY COLLEGE 'LEARN AND EARN' HIGH SCHOOL

School is One of 14 'Learn and Earn' Schools Open Across the State

RALEIGH— Gov. Mike Easley today cut the ribbon at the new Sampson Early College High School, located on the campus of Sampson Community College. Easley was joined by Dr. William Aiken, president of Sampson Community College and Sampson County Schools Superintendent Stewart Hobbs and Clinton City Schools Superintendent Gene Hales.

"I commend Sampson County Schools, Clinton City Schools and Sampson Community College for stepping up to the plate to open a Learn and Earn high school," Easley said. "As a result of their hard work and thoughtful planning, 51 freshmen have nearly finished their first semester at this school and are on track to gain the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a future in the 21st century economy."

The Sampson Early College High School opened in August of 2005. Students at the school take courses in classrooms on the campus of Sampson Community College and are currently enrolled in Integrated Math 1, English 1, Civics, Special Topics, Earth Science and Career Explorations. Each student is also enrolled in one college class this semester, either College Student Success or Introduction to Computers and will earn both high school and college credit for the courses.

Easley first announced the *Learn and Earn* high school program in September 2004. The schools are autonomous facilities located on the campus of a college or university that provide students the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree or two years of transferable college credit. The curriculum at each school creates clear connections to the workplace and provides students a graduated series of work-based learning experiences.

The *Learn and Earn* high school program is administered by the N.C. New Schools Project, Easley's high school reform initiative announced in 2003. The schools receive support from the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, the UNC System and the N.C. Community College System. In the 2005-2006 legislative session, Easley worked with the General Assembly to secure \$4.1 million to support the 14 existing *Learn and Earn* high schools and 23 planned sites across the state.

In addition to the new schools created through the *Learn and Earn* initiative, the New Schools Project is also creating 100 new and redesigned high schools across North Carolina with \$11 million in grant funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The 100 new schools will open by 2008.

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